

## United States Postal Service

## § 233.4

Service Operations Support Group, and their designees, are authorized to order mail covers. Under no circumstances may a postmaster or postal employee furnish information as defined in § 233.3(c)(1) to any person, except as authorized by a mail cover order issued by the Chief Postal Inspector or designee, or as directed by a postal inspector under the circumstances described in § 233.3(f).

(5) Except for mail covers ordered upon fugitives or subjects engaged, or suspected to be engaged, in any activity against the national security, no mail cover order shall remain in effect for more than 30 days, unless adequate justification is provided by the requesting authority. At the expiration of the mail cover order period, or prior thereto, the requesting authority may be granted additional 30-day periods under the same conditions and procedures applicable to the original request. The requesting authority must provide a statement of the investigative benefit of the mail cover and anticipated benefits to be derived from its extension.

(6) No mail cover shall remain in force longer than 120 continuous days unless personally approved for further extension by the Chief Postal Inspector or designees at National Headquarters.

(7) Except for fugitive cases, no mail cover shall remain in force when an information has been filed or the subject has been indicted for the matter for which the mail cover is requested. If the subject is under investigation for further criminal violations, or a mail cover is required to assist in the identification of property, proceeds or assets forfeitable because of a violation of criminal law, a new mail cover order must be requested consistent with these regulations.

(8) Any national security mail cover request must be approved personally by the head of the law enforcement agency requesting the cover or one designee at the agency's headquarters level. The head of the agency shall notify the Chief Postal Inspector in writing of such designation.

(h) *Records.* (1) All requests for mail covers, with records of action ordered thereon, and all reports issued pursuant thereto, shall be deemed within the custody of the Chief Postal Inspector.

However, the physical storage of this data shall be at the discretion of the Chief Postal Inspector.

(2) If the Chief Postal Inspector, or his designee, determines a mail cover was improperly ordered, all data acquired while the cover was in force shall be destroyed, and the requesting authority notified of the discontinuance of the mail cover and the reasons therefor.

(3) Any data concerning mail covers shall be made available to any mail cover subject in any legal proceeding through appropriate discovery procedures.

(4) The retention period for files and records pertaining to mail covers shall be 8 years.

(i) *Reporting to requesting authority.* Once a mail cover has been duly ordered, authorization may be delegated to any employee in the Postal Inspection Service to transmit mail cover reports directly to the requesting authority.

(j) *Review.* (1) The Chief Postal Inspector, or his designee at Inspection Service Headquarters shall periodically review mail cover orders issued by the Manager, Inspection Service Operations Support Group or their designees to ensure compliance with these regulations and procedures.

(2) The Chief Postal Inspector shall select and appoint a designee to conduct a periodic review of national security mail cover orders.

(3) The Chief Postal Inspector's determination in all matters concerning mail covers shall be final and conclusive and not subject to further administrative review.

(k) *Military postal system.* Section 233.3 does not apply to the military postal system overseas or to persons performing military postal duties overseas. Information about regulations prescribed by the Department of Defense for the military postal system overseas may be obtained from the Department of Defense.

[58 FR 36599, July 8, 1993, as amended at 61 FR 42557, Aug. 16, 1996; 74 FR 18297, Apr. 22, 2009]

### § 233.4 Withdrawal of mail privileges.

(a) *False representation and lottery orders—*(1) *Issuance.* Pursuant to 39 U.S.C.

## § 233.5

## 39 CFR Ch. I (7–1–15 Edition)

3005, the Judicial Officer of the Postal Service, acting upon a satisfactory evidentiary basis, may issue a mail-stop order against anyone seeking mailed remittance of money or property by means of a false-representation or lottery scheme. Such orders provide for return of mail and refund of postal money orders to remitters.

(2) *Enforcement.* Notice of these orders, including any necessary instructions on enforcement responsibilities and procedures, is published in the Postal Bulletin. Generally, an order against a domestic enterprise is enforced only by the post office designated in the order. All personnel processing mail for dispatch abroad assist in enforcing orders against foreign enterprises by forwarding mail addressed to such enterprises to designated post offices.

(b) *Fictitious name or address and not residents of the place of address orders—*

(1) *Issuance.* Pursuant to 39 U.S.C. 3003, 3004, when there is satisfactory evidence that mail is addressed to a fictitious name, title, or address used for any unlawful business, and no one has established a right to have the mail delivered to him, or that mail is addressed to places not the residence or regular business address of the person for whom they are intended to enable the person to escape identification, the Judicial Officer may, pursuant to Part 964, order that the mail be returned to the sender.

(2) *Notice.* (i) The Chief Postal Inspector or his delegate must give notice to the addressee of mail withheld from delivery pursuant to 39 U.S.C. 3003, 3004 that such action has been taken and advise him that he may:

(A) Obtain such mail upon presenting proof of his identity and right to receive such mail, or

(B) Petition the Judicial Officer for the return of such mail. (ii) The notice must be in writing and served by personal service upon the addressee or by Certified Mail (Return Receipt Requested) and by First Class Mail.

(3) *Enforcement.* Notice of any order issued pursuant to 39 U.S.C. 3003, 3004, and any necessary implementing in-

structions, are published in the Postal Bulletin.

[45 FR 1613, Jan. 8, 1980. Redesignated at 46 FR 34330, July 1, 1981, and amended at 53 FR 1780, Jan. 22, 1988]

### § 233.5 Requesting financial records from a financial institution.

(a) *Definitions.* The terms used in this section have the same meaning as similar terms used in the Right to Financial Privacy Act of 1978, Title XI of Pub. L. 95-630. *Act* means the *Right to Financial Privacy Act of 1978*.

(b) *Purpose.* The purpose of these regulations is: (1) To authorize the Inspection Service Department of the U.S. Postal Service to request financial records from a financial institution pursuant to the formal written request procedure authorized by section 1108 of the Act and (2) to set forth the conditions under which such request may be made.

(c) *Authorization.* The Inspection Service Department is authorized to request financial records of any customer from a financial institution pursuant to a formal written request under the Act only if:

(1) No administrative summons or subpoena authority reasonably appears to be available to the Inspection Service Department to obtain financial records for the purpose for which the records are sought;

(2) There is reason to believe that the records sought are relevant to a legitimate law enforcement inquiry and will further that inquiry;

(3) The request is issued by a supervisory official of a rank designated by the Chief Postal Inspector. Officials so designated shall not delegate this authority to others;

(4) The request adheres to the requirements set forth in paragraph (d) of this section; and

(5) The notice requirements set forth in section 1108(4) of the Act, or the requirements pertaining to the delay of notice in section 1109 of the Act, are satisfied, except in situations (*e.g.*, section 1113(g)) where no notice is required.

(d) *Written request.* (1) The formal request must be in the form of a letter or memorandum to an appropriate official